



April 16, 2020

Dear Governor:

We are writing to ask you to ensure that any temporary increases in truck weight limits on state or federal highways granted during this period of the COVID-19 crisis be strictly limited to the duration of the crisis and apply only to qualifying relief supplies.

Each of us serves on the Board of the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks, a national non-profit highway safety organization. Combined, we have over 100 years of law enforcement experience including years of experience enforcing highway safety laws and responding to truck crashes.

Congress sets the maximum weight limits for trucks on interstate highways. These limits have been intentionally set at a level to balance public safety, infrastructure preservation and the legitimate needs of commerce. During this crisis, however, Congress granted each state the authority to temporarily increase truck weights on the interstates in their states. That authority is limited to 120 days and only applies to trucks transporting relief material. (MAP-21, Section 1511) It is essential that any increase granted under this authority terminate when the crisis is over.

Limits on the size and weight of trucks are essential to ensure that our highways are safe and to preserve our infrastructure. Heavier trucks are more dangerous and bring greater risks for first responders, truck drivers and motorists engaged in essential travel. Heavier trucks would also worsen our already deteriorating roads and bridges. Consider these facts from the USDOT's 2016 Comprehensive Truck Size and Weight Study Final Report:

- Heavier trucks, in limited state testing, had a 47 percent to 400 percent higher crash rate than 80,000-pound trucks;
- Heavier trucks had a higher out-of-service rate, including an 18 percent higher brake violation rate than 80,000-pound trucks;
- Heavier trucks are likely to result in more severe crashes; and,
- Heavier trucks will put immense strain on the nation's aging infrastructure, especially older bridges, creating serious safety issues and causing taxpayers to foot the bill.

Law enforcement across the country must patrol our highways and police our cities and towns. The operation of bigger trucks would put them at even greater risk as they continue to serve and protect motorists.

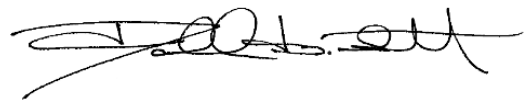
Moreover, truck drivers know that bigger trucks are more dangerous and more difficult to handle which is why they oppose increases in truck weight. Truck drivers are on the road each and every day, risking their own health by doing their jobs and delivering the goods that Americans need during the COVID-19 crisis and we will depend on them after the crisis ends. Let's make sure we do not make their jobs harder once this pandemic has passed.

We must do everything we can to protect our citizens, law enforcement and truck drivers during this crisis and beyond.


Sincerely,



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CC: State Department of Transportation Leadership